

Meeting Minutes

Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission Tuesday, May 26, 2015 – Minneapolis Central Library

Meeting attendees: Jeffrey Strand, Matthew Dobratz, Ishmael Israel, Denis Houle, Tessa Wetjen, David Zaffrann, Eric Gustafson, Doron Clark, and Francisco Segovia.

NCEC members excused: Kirk Roggensack, Kenya McKnight, Debra Behrens, and Maleta Kimmons.

NCEC members absent: Carol Pass.

1. Public Comment

Public Comment was opened at 5:25pm. Peter Rickmyer thanked the Grievance committee for meeting to consider his complaint against the Jordan Area Community Council. He spoke about clarifying a disability request and also noted that another neighborhood organization is not compliant for access.

2. Introductions

Approve Agenda: Chair Israel convened the NCEC meeting at 5:30pm. Gustafson proposed adding an item to the agenda to authorize allowing email votes in the upcoming NCEC elections. It was agreed to add that discussion as agenda item 8.2

Motion: Strand, seconded by Clark to approve the agenda with the addition of agenda item 8.2, NCEC election Process. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Executive Committee Reports

Secretary's Report:

- Minutes:** Strand moves to approve the April 2015 minutes. Wetjen Seconds the motion. Correction made to section 4.1 should be 41 not 42. Motion Carried.
- Attendance Report:** Commissioners Roggensack, Behrens, Kimmons and McKnight are excused from the May meeting.

4. Presentation on Creative CityMaking Project

For reasonable accommodations or alternative formats please contact the Neighborhood and Community Relations Department at 612-673-3737. People who are deaf or hard of hearing can use a relay service to call 311 at 612-673-3000. TTY users call 612-673-2157 or 612-673-2626.

Para asistencia 612-673-2700 - Rau kev pab 612-673-2800 - Hadii aad Caawimaad u baahantahay 612-673-3500.

D.A. Bullock and Arian Fine, the two artists working with NCR on the 2015 project, provided an overview of the project which involves making a video. It is focused on the Blueprint for Equitable Engagement and reaching out to groups to get opinions on what equity means to them. A key question for residents to answer is, what does equity look like?

Questions and comments from Commission members included:

- Wetjen asked what the target audience for this project is. Fine responded that it includes both people in City government and residents, particularly residents with limited English language abilities to ensure that all residents are being heard.
- Wetjen suggested that organizations funded by the One Minneapolis Fund should be included.
- Strand stated that often residents living in areas of concentrated poverty are not involved in decision making. Are these residents being sought out? Fine responded that yes the project will involve people from throughout the city.
- Segovia said that to achieve greater equity the greatest need for to transform systems, what is the biggest challenge of this project? Fine responded that the biggest challenge is to broaden the definition of public art. Some in the community do not think public art is for them.

5. Committee and Task Force Reports

One Minneapolis Fund

Chair Ishmael noted that any members who have a conflict of interest on the One Minneapolis Fund will abstain from voting.

Wetjen, Chair of the One Minneapolis Fund Committee, described the process, noting changes from the first two years of the program, the biggest change being allowing applications to one of two groups. One is for projects involving engagement with City boards and commissions or neighborhood groups. The other is for work in engagement among targeted communities. The Committee members reviewed and scored each application then reviewed the top scoring applications over two meetings. To fill in for Committee members who were in some way involved with applications, Henry Jimenez, a former NCEC member and Ayianna Kennerly, a NCR staff member participated.

Dobratz, a member of the Committee, wished to acknowledge the work put in to this review by his fellow Committee members.

Zaffrann, also a member of the Committee, remarked that it was an incredibly difficult process with 41 proposals, that there were many good applications and it was very difficult to make recommendations of which should be funded.

Strand noted that it is difficult to review the recommendations without more information on the projects. He also stated that the NCEC should provide authorization before non-NCEC members are involved in reviewing applications, as the Neighborhoods 2020 Committee had been very intentional in the process to obtain NCEC consent in its charge. Strand questioned the staff report regarding The Neighborhood Hub as South Minneapolis, that actually two groups focus on North Minneapolis residents.

Motion by Wetjen, seconded by Dobratz, to approve the recommendations from the One Minneapolis Committee for 2015 funding from the One Minneapolis Fund. The Motion carried unanimously with 7 Ayes. Segovia abstained.

Wetjen stated that the volunteer evaluation fell through, that NCR has hired a consultant on a small contract to assist in developing an evaluation process on the program.

Wetjen also reported that the Committee had discussed what the request in the 2016 Budget for the One Minneapolis Fund should. It was also reported that additional NCR staff will be involved with the various project in this funding cycle. The One Minneapolis Fund recommendations will be scheduled for the HECE Committee June 8 at 1:30pm.

City Department Engagement Task Force

Committee Chair Clark reported that the Committee met 4/29/15 and has looked at current engagement practices in key City departments and is developing a self-reporting questionnaire for Departments. The committee also looked at the IAP2 public engagement process. The Committee is also updating the City's Community Engagement Process Model Guidebook which was developed in 2006. An interim report will be submitted in June.

Commissioner Clark left the meeting at 6:18pm.

Community Innovation Fund

Committee Chair Zaffrann noted that the applications are due on June 3rd and that recommendations from the Committee will be presented at the June Commission Meeting.

Neighborhoods 2020

Committee Chair Gustafson reported that the committee met. They have 10 people involved, four of whom are not NCEC members, looking at geographic and diversity in general. The next meeting is May 28th at 5:30 PM.

Grievance Committee

Israel, who chaired the committee, stated that the grievance was considered on May 21st. The Committee report was drafted by Commissioner Strand and approved unanimously by the committee members. The findings are as follows:

Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission ("NCEC")

Grievance Committee Decision Document/Findings Report (Grievance Appeal Peter Rickmyer and Jordan Area Community Council)

Hearing Date May 21, 2015

Issue: The NCEC received an appeal of a response by the Neighborhood and Community Relations Department ("NCR") on a grievance filed against the Jordan Area Community Council ("JACC") by Mr. Peter Rickmyer, a Jordan resident, whose claim is that JACC has not welcomed him to attend its meetings.

Grievance Committee Process: The Grievance Committee empowered by the NCEC under the Community Participation Program Guidelines convened at 5:30pm on Thursday, May 21, 2015, at the Crown Roller Mill, 2nd Floor. The Grievance Committee consisted of Commissioners Israel, Dobratz, Zaffrann, and Strand. The Grievance Committee came to order at 5:52pm by NCEC Chair Israel. Commissioner Israel self-nominated to serve a chair, seconded by Commissioner Zaffrann, and was elected. Mr. Rickmyer and Commissioner Strand recorded audio of the meeting. The Grievance Committee reviewed the NCR Department background information in the staff report dated May 21, 2015 and exhibits#1-#4, inclusive, prepared by Howard Blin, Community Engagement Manager.

The proposed agenda and grievance process was adopted on motion by Commissioner Strand, seconded by Zaffrann. Motion adopted. Mr. Rickmyer was present on his behalf and went first to use up to 10 minutes to present his grievance appeal and 5 minutes for rebuttal. Ms. Cathy Spann, Executive Director, was present on behalf of JACC and followed with up to 10 minutes for presentation to the Grievance Committee, and 5 minutes for rebuttal. Mr. Rickmyer presented his rebuttal for up to 5 minutes, followed by Executive Director Spann with JACC's rebuttal for up to 5 minutes. Grievance Committee members asked questions of Mr. Rickmyer and Executive Director Spann following the conclusion of presentations and rebuttals. The information gathering was concluded and the Grievance Committee began deliberations at 6:50pm after Mr. Rickmyer, Executive Director Spann, and Mr. Blin had left the conference room.

Decision/Findings: The Grievance Committee by unanimous vote of 4-0 of the members to adopt the following findings and recommendations to be presented to the NCEC and NCR Department on May 26, 2015:

1. The matter could have been dismissed on technical grounds as not falling within the definition of a grievance, but the Grievance Committee chooses instead to rule on the merits of the case.
2. The evidence supports a finding that in this instance and concerning the initial "grievance," that both JACC and the NCR Department responded appropriately to the matter raised by Mr. Rickmyer by allegedly leaving a letter under the JACC office door on December 24, 2013 when the JACC office was closed for business.
3. The evidence supports a finding that there is no merit to support the Rickmyer appeal of the communications from JACC and NCR Department. The Grievance Committee votes to sustain the decision of the Director of NCR Department, or his assigns, in this matter.
4. The Grievance Committee recommends that in the future NCR Department closely monitor and track grievance appeals processing steps and timelines, to ensure observance of due process and adherence to the Community Participation Program Guidelines. In addition, all communications to residents should be prepared in simple, clear, plain language.

6. NRP Policy Board Report

NRP Chair Strand reported that the May meeting was canceled due to a lack of a quorum. The Policy Board will comment on the guidelines developed on timelines for spending NRP at the June meeting. NRP Chair Strand said his goal is to have the NRP Policy Board weigh in on the NRP Fund Balance policy recommendations by June 30, 2015 (following the NCEC recommendations and end date for public and neighborhood organizations comments).

7. NCR Report

Thompson reported that the process is underway for developing guidelines for neighborhoods on allowable balances and of unspent NRP funds. Development of these guidelines was directed by the City Council Health, Environment and Community Engagement Committee in November 2014 as part of the budget review. A survey of neighborhoods has been conducted with the responses currently being reviewed. Thompson further described the draft guidelines and the process being followed.

Commissioner comments and questions included:

- Wetjen suggested a more aggressive approach should be taken for low capacity neighborhoods.
- Strand noted that at the public meeting held with neighborhoods, it was noted that some funding for some projects is not being spent as it is dependent upon action by various jurisdictions.
- Strand stated that an appeal process should be included for neighborhood organizations in danger of losing funding.
- Israel asked if there a process for stopping the clock if unforeseen circumstances arise (e.g. the recent shift of housing contracts from CEE). Thompson responded that there is, but it is more of a “but for” clause where money would be spent but for certain circumstances.
- Segovia stated that it should be understood that some people are currently not being heard by neighborhood organizations.
- Strand suggested that a provision should be included to reallocate unspent funds to projects such as the One Minneapolis Fund or the Community Innovation Fund.
- Segovia asked if rather than using a formula allocation to neighborhoods, perhaps a participatory budget process could be used where residents come together to determine how funding could be used in a more focused manner. Boston was cited as a jurisdiction where participatory budgeting is done.
- Israel commented that participatory budgeting is an inclusive process.
- Strand asked Chair Israel if the chair wished to have a motion to refer the matter to the Executive Committee for action at the June NCEC meeting.

Motion by Strand, seconded by Zaffrann to refer the guidelines to the June 2015 Executive Committee to draft recommendations on the guidelines for placement as an action item on the June NCEC meeting agenda, which would be sent out electronically to members. Motion carried unanimously.

4. New Business

Gustafson referred to the upcoming elections in the NCEC Districts. In some districts candidates are running unopposed. He suggested that in those cases, the elections could be conducted by email.

Motion by Gustafson, seconded by Wetjen to allow a vote by email in the June 18th NCEC elections in case where only one candidate has filed for the seat.

Commissioner comments on the motion included the following:

- Houle stated that unless people meet, it is difficult to determine if the candidate is qualified.
- Strand reminded the Commission that the election rules were adopted by the neighborhood organizations, not the NCEC. He believes this is the NCEC overstepping its reach; that overreaching the rules could open up challenges to the election process. Strand suggested that a change of venue from downtown near Crown Roller where there is so much road construction might be appropriate with notice to electors.
- Segovia referred to his election, and that one should not question the integrity of just one person running for the NCEC seat.
- Gustafson stated that voter guides have been distributed which give information on the candidates. He is not asking change the rules, but merely to allow votes by email in cases where only one candidate files.

The motion failed on a vote of 4 Nays (Strand, Houle, Wetjen, Segovia) and 3 Ayes (Gustafson, Zaffrann, Dobratz).

Commissioner Wetjen inquired about arrangements for orientation for newly elected and appointed NCEC members in July.

Open Forum: Commissioner Strand reminded the members and public about the upcoming Joint Public Hearing on the 2016-2020 Capital Budget before the City Planning Commission and the Capital Long-range Improvement Committee, June 4, 2015 at 4:30pm time certain.

Adjournment: A Motion to adjourn was made by Strand, seconded by Segovia, and adopted. The meeting adjourned at 7:10 PM